Promotion of backwater tourism in Goa

3006. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether backwater tourism in Goa has been conceptualised either by the Central Government or by the Goa authorities;

(b) whether the Central Government have made study in this regard on identified backwaters;

(c) whether the State Government has approached the Central Government in this regard;

(d) whether Central Government has any special scheme in this regard to assist financially and technically the State Governments; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Backwater tourism through boat trips, cruises, house boats are being provided by private operators and Goa Tourism Development Corporation along the banks of Mandovi and Zuari rivers and Islands of Divar, Chorao, etc.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) The Central Government assists the State Governments in development and promotion of tourism including projects for Eco-tourism and backwaters under the following schemes:

(1) Development of Tourism Circuits

(2) Product Infrastructure and Destination Development

(3) Large Revenue Generating Projects

(4) Fairs and Festivals

Guidelines for adventure tourism

3007. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has issued guidelines on the basic minimum standards for adventure tourism in the country for equipment, organisers and tourists;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the new policy proposes an accreditation system for operators depending on the facilities they provide; and

(c) if so, the details of the guidelines in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) These guidelines cover land, air and water based activities which includes mountaineering, trekking, hang-gliding, paragliding, bungee jumping and rafting. A brief on the Guidelines is given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

A brief on basic minimum standards for adventure tourism related activities

Adventure tourism activity in our country has reached a high-level of participation. In view of the same, Ministry of Tourism has formulated Basic Minimum Standards to address issues of not merely the safety of clients but also the quality of adventure experience These Standards also address the issues of minimizing impacts on the fragile environment in which these activities are generally conducted

The Standards cover activities, which are land based, air based and water based. In the land based activities mountaineering and trekking has been covered. In water based activities river running has been covered. In air based activities parasailing, paragliding and bungee jumping has been covered.

The Basic Minimum Standards for mountaineering applies specifically to commercial operators attempting 6000 metres or other comparable peaks, which offer to guide or accompany climbers above Base Camp and also to operators who offer more limited facilities. It also concerns operators who supply transport etc. to Base Camp and also supply Base Camp services and High Altitude porters The guidelines related to trekking comprises issues concerning guide, porter staff, medical help and information collected from clients in advance to ascertain his potential

The Basic Minimum Standards for river running activity comprises issues concerning availability of trained guide with adequate experience and also covers special requirements for operators conducting these particular activities. It also covers the requirements, which every client must fulfil in case they want to experience this particular activity.

The Basic Minimum Standards for air based activity covers the specification regarding the equipments which can be used for aero sport and also covers qualifications required for instructors and operators who are crucial for conducting these activities.

The Standards also cover formation of an Accreditation Committee to monitor adventure tourism activities. The Committee will comprise of the Government and Industry representatives and of National Training Institutions, which will oversee the safety standards and continuously evolve/ update the guidelines.

Development of tourism in North-Eastern States

3008. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of foreign tourists visited North-Eastern States, particularly Assam during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06;

(b) the steps taken by her Ministry to give more focus to the rich cultural heritage and natural beauty of North-Eastern States at the international level; and

(c) the steps taken to develop the hospitality business in Assam for development of tourism?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The number of foreign tourists visited North Eastern States is as under:

State	2004	2005	2006
Arunachal Pradesh	269	289	150 (Received upto May)
Assam	7285	10782	2595 (Received upto June)
Manipur	249	316	204 (Received upto August)
Meghalaya	12407	5099	1883 (Received upto May)
Mizoram	326	273	264 (Received upto August)
Nagaland	1084	883	425 (Received upto May)
Sikkim	14646	16523	8601 (Received upto May)
Tripura	3171	2677	78 (Received upto June)